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STRICTURES

ON THE

PRINCE OF WALES's LETTER

TO

Mr. PITT,

BRITISH MUSEUM

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PRINCE OF WALES's LETTER

TO

Mr. PITT,

IN A

LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS,

BY CANDOR.

——————QUI SIBI FIDIT
DUX REGIT EXAMEN.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

PRINCE of WALES.

SIR,

WHEN a Prince publiſhes to the world his own letter to a public Miniſter, his *Conduct* and his *Letter* become fair topics of diſcuſſion, and if erroneous, juſt ſubjects of animadverſion.

The late publication of your letter to Mr. *Pitt*, in all the public newſpapers of the

kingdom, will, I conceive, be thought an ample apology for addreſſing to your Royal Highneſs, the preſent conſiderations.

For a moment, Sir, diveſt yourſelf of the ſhackles of your preſent party, diſdain to look through the falſe medium of *their* opticks, aſſert the independence of your *own* judgement, and conſult the unbiaſſed dictates of your *own* reaſon.

Let me then aſk your unprejudiced underſtanding, was it *prudent* or *politic* to *write* the letter? was it *Princely* to *publiſh* it?

The moment you wrote that letter, you unneceſſarily committed yourſelf with both Houſes of Parliament, by the haſty avowal of ſentiments which they have ſince by their votes diſapproved of and condemned, and by a raſh and ill adviſed diſapprobation of meaſures, which have ſince received the ſanction

ſánction of their authority; you then aſſumed the *ſhackles* of a *Party*, when you might have remained *free* and *independent*; and you became the champion of a cauſe, the ſucceſs of which was then *precarious*, and which ſubſequent defeat has *no longer* left *doubtful*. In a moment of difficulty, in which prudence ſuggeſted to conciliate the affections, and acquire the ſupport of every party and every man, you adopted a ſtep which eventu[illegible] has involved you in differences with both Houſes of Parliament, and operated as a declaration of hoſtilities againſt all his Majeſty's Miniſters.

I come now to the conſideration of the next point, the publication of your letter with that of Mr. *Pitt*, a tranſaction ſtill more unjuſtifiable, as it was without any colour of *neceſſity* to authoriſe it, or *example* to warrant it.

Decency, and I hope *Truth* forbid the ſuppoſition, that this meaſure originated from *your Royal Highneſs*, every unconſtitutional feature of it betrays its monſtrous parent, and filiates it with unerring certainty on the preſent *Coalition Junto*.

When in your Royal Highneſs's name it was deſired of Mr. *Pitt*, that his communications in future ſhould be *in writing*, *Candour* would not have expected that this requiſition was made for the purpoſe of *publiſhing* them in every *Newſpaper* with ſuch ſtrictures and animadverſions, as the *acrimony* of *oppoſition* and the *virulence* of *Party* could ſupply.

If the *publication* has been adopted for the purpoſe of *influencing* the pending deliberations of *Parliament*, ſuch a motive was *unconſtitutional in its nature*, and *unjuſtifiable in its tendency*.

Situated

Situated as you were, on the verge of being called to the exercise of the executive power of the kingdom, it was not *prudent* or *politic* to hold out to the Parliament or People, that you were anxious to obtain *power* in its *utmost extent*, and utterly *impatient* of any, even the *minutest restriction*; such an avowal of your sentiments, served only to shew the *absolute necessity* of those restrictions which before might be deemed *only expedient*.

In calling the letter, or the sentiments contained in it, *your Royal Highness's*, I do it only in conformity with the *title* and *language* of the *letter itself*. But I am most thoroughly convinced, that not one proposition contained in it, was the genuine emanation of your breast, and that the *publication* of it was repugnant to the ingenuous sentiments of your mind.

When

When I conſider *that conduct* and *thoſe ſentiments* which were unequivocally *your own*, and which will ever do you honour, 'tis impoſſible I can impute to you any thing *incompatible* with the *one*, or *ſubverſive* of the *other*. When in the Houſe of Lords you diſclaimed, by your Royal brother, any aſſumption of authority not conceded by the free voice of both Houſes of Parliament; and when in the Houſe of Commons you intimated through Mr. *Fox*, your averſion to burthen the country by any additional eſtabliſhment for yourſelf, every friend of his country ſaw with exultation in the former, the genuine *rectitude of* your *Conſtitutional principles*, and in the latter, the noble *diſintereſtedneſs of your mind.*

How incompatible are *theſe* ſentiments and declarations, with *thoſe* avowed in your letter. In the *former* you *diſclaim* all authority not freely and conſtitutionally *given* by both Houſes

Houſes of Parliament; in the *latter*, you conſider yourſelf *injured*, *inſulted* and *degraded*, if a ſingle particle of *Prerogative* were *withheld*. In the *former* you *reject* any *increaſed Eſtabliſhment of your own*; in the *latter*, you deem yourſelf *oppreſſed* if you are not ſuffered to poſſeſs uncontrolled, *in addition to your own*, the *whole Eſtabliſhment of his Majeſty*.

What then ſhould you think of *thoſe men*, who have *abuſed* your royal name, by *aſcribing* to you ſentiments *foreign to your mind*, and *contradictory to your avowed public declarations*, and who have fixed you with a *conduct repugnant to your Noble nature, and injurious to your honour*.

Is it not obvious, that their object was to involve you in hoſtilities with his Majeſty's confidential ſervants, and the other Members of the preſent Adminiſtration, and thus by effectually

effectually excluding *them* from the future Adminiſtration of your Royal Highneſs, ſecure the Government of the Kingdom *excluſively to themſelves?*

That the letter is the *ſole fabrication* of the *Party*, appears ſtill more manifeſt, from a conſideration that the Reſtrictions are evidently calculated only to counteract any *indirect purpoſes* of *theſe men*, and by no means *deſtroy* any juſt views of your *Royal Highneſs*, or *infringe* upon any of the Prerogatives of the *Crown*.

The powers which the Reſtrictions withhold for the preſent, are not *annihilated* or *loſt* to your Royal Highneſs, they are only *reſerved*. The branches of Royal Prerogative are not *lop'd* from the tree, they are only *ſheltered* from the impending *ſtorm*, and *protected* from the threatened *blight*; they will

again

again in due ſeaſon, *expand* and *flouriſh* in their *native vigour*.

Peerages and *Places for life*, are powerful ſources of *influence* as long as they remain in *proſpect*; but when *attainment* ſucceeds to *expectation*, they are often found ſources of influence *no longer*; of this truth, the reign of your Royal father coinciding with the teſtimony of ages, affords *living proofs*. Your Royal Highneſs is not therefore *injured*, but *protected*, when you are precluded *for the preſent*, from *anticipating* the *reſources* of your *future reign*.

When, therefore, it is conſidered, that your Royal Highneſs has in truth, no intereſt in oppoſing the preſent reſtrictions, it cannot be ſuppoſed, that the violent diſapprobation of them manifeſted in the letter alluded to, can proceed from your *Royal Highneſs*. But if there exiſts a *Set of Men* who

who aſpire to be the Miniſters of your Royal Highneſs's Government, and who wanting the confidence of the nation, or from any other cauſe, are precluded from any reaſonable hope of being long able to maintain their ſituations in power, to *ſuch men*, theſe Reſtrictions muſt be peculiarly *obnoxious*; to *ſuch men*, it muſt be peculiarly diſtreſſing, to be precluded from deriving *every poſſible advantage* from their *ſhort lived golden harveſt*; to *ſuch men* it muſt be extremely mortifying, to be denied the privilege of gratifying the *weak*, the *vain*, and the *ambitious* of their *Party* with the *honours* of the *Peerage*; the *indigent*, the *profligate* and the *avaricious* with *places for life*, *penſions* and *reverſions*; to *ſuch men* it muſt be matter of affliction, to be debarred the power of appropriating to *themſelves* the *patrimony* of the *Crown*, and by the depredations of a few *months*, or even *weeks*, *impoveriſh* the *remainder* of your *future Reign*; ſuch men there *are*, and to *them alone*,

alone, I attribute the *fabrication* of the letter in queſtion, and to them alone I impute its publication.

I ſhall now proceed to make ſome animadverſions on the *letter itſelf*, which I think will be found to contain propoſitions *repugnant* to *truth*, *contradictory* to *law*, and *ſubverſive* of the *conſtitution*.

In commenting on the letter, I do not mean to deſcend to the unimportant conſideration of *verbal criticiſm*; and although I think the letter affords ſufficient ſcope on that head, yet ſuch an inveſtigation is far beneath the preſent object.

The firſt propoſition to which our attention is attracted in the beginning of the letter, is not one of the leaſt exceptionable:—We are there told, that "concerning the "ſteps already taken by Mr. *Pitt*, the Prince

"is

" is ſilent: nothing *done* by the two Houſes " of Parliament, can be a proper ſubject of " his animadverſion." Thus, conſidering the *act* of the two *Houſes of Parliament* as a *ſtep* of Mr. *Pitt*, a ſuggeſtion not very complimentary or very honourable to both Houſes, and certainly not very conſonant to the conſtitutional idea of the *independence* of each branch of the legiſlature. And when we are told that *animadverſion* is withheld from the *ſteps taken by Mr. Pitt*, becauſe they are *done* by *Parliament*, is it not neceſſarily *implied*, that had they not been *ſo done*, the Prince would not have ſpared his *animadverſions*? and that both Houſes of Parliament have *done* that, which, in the Prince's opinion, *deſerves* animadverſion? One can hardly admire ſufficiently the ingenuity with which, in the ſmall compaſs of three lines, Mr. *Pitt and both Houſes of Parliament* are thrown together in one *common cauſe*, their *dependence* on each other *inferred*, and a re-

proof

proof and cenſure, or (which is ſynonimous) an *animadverſion* on both obviouſly *implied.*

Shortly after, in the ſame paragraph, alluding to the Reſtrictions, we are told, that the Prince is obliged to conſider the "plan" as *injurious* both to his *Father* and *Sovereign*, as well as to the *public intereſt.* The words are, "A plan, the accompliſhment of which, "every motive of duty to his Father and "Sovereign, as well as of regard for the "public intereſt, obliges him to conſider as "injurious to both." When it is conſidered that this *plan* was then formed by his Majeſty's Miniſters, and at that time ſubmitted for the Prince's conſideration, we cannot long be at a loſs to aſſign a *motive* for inſerting in the Prince's letter an accuſation againſt *them* of forming a plan *injurious* both to *King* and *People*; or, in the ſubſequent language of the letter, "a project for pro-"ducing weakneſs, diſorder, and inſecu-

" rity in every branch of the adminiſtra-
" tion of affairs—a project for dividing the
" Royal Family from each other;" with a variety of other odious appellations, with which this *plan* is abundantly loaded. Such a *charge* might probably diſqualify *them* from becoming the Miniſters of your Royal Highneſs; and, *ſo far*, might probably promote the intereſt of *others*: but when we conſider that Parliament, who were then conſulting upon the ſubject, might adopt and ſanction that plan, as they ſince have done, what are we to think of the *deſperate raſhneſs* of *thoſe men*, who, to excite hoſtilities between the *Prince* and his *Majeſty's Miniſters* by ſuch a charge, have eventually *committed* him with *Parliament*, who now ſtand equally obnoxious to the accuſation thus made, publiſhed, and recorded.

Did theſe men ever reflect, that the happineſs, the eaſe, and proſperity of your fu-

ture

ture reign muſt eſſentially depend on the good underſtanding between your Royal Highneſs and that great and powerful body, who then *might be*, and now eventually *are*, thus collectively *criminated* and *inſulted*, by charges of a nature ſo ſerious and culpable.

Did they ever conſider, that you were ſhortly to meet that very Parliament, and appear at its head? Did any ſuch conſiderations and reflections occur when theſe men adviſed the letter in queſtion? Or did their imaginations carry them no further than to vent their virulence againſt meaſures which reſtrained any abuſe of power that *they* might have meditated? In the *former caſe*, our *aſtoniſhment* is excited by their *wickedneſs*; in the *latter*, by their *folly*.

And when we reflect, that at the time that this letter was publiſhed by theſe

men *, the Houſe of Commons had actually voted theſe reſtrictions, the charges were then no longer *eventual* with reſpect to that Houſe, but at that time were an actual and poſitive *libel* upon the proceedings of the Commons of England.

We are then told, alluding to the plan, that " he (your Royal Highneſs) appre- " hends it muſt have been formed with ſuf- " ficient deliberation to preclude the pro- " bability of any argument of his produ- " cing any alteration of ſentiment in the " projectors of it." Thus you are made to *abandon* the *only* ground upon which ſuch a ſeries of *abuſe* and *crimination* could be even *palliated*; and your Royal Highneſs is reduced to the humiliating condition of an angry woman, venting her *impotent reſentment*, with-

* The publication of the letter by the *Coalition party*, was a matter of ſuch notoriety, that when they were charged with it in the Houſe of Lords, not a man of them attempted to deny it.

out even the *hope* of producing, the ſmalleſt *effect*.

It is impoſſible not to recognize the petty animoſity of *party* in that paſſage of the letter in which a *perſonal cenſure* is unbecomingly caſt upon Mr. *Pitt*, in ſtating, "that it "was not neceſſary for Mr. *Pitt*, nor yet "proper, to ſuggeſt to the Prince the re-"ſtraint he propoſes againſt the Prince's "granting away the King's real or perſonal "property." Here your Royal Highneſs is made to arraign the *propriety* of Mr. *Pitt*'s *perſonal conduct*, and in doing ſo, to exceed thoſe limits of obſervation preſcribed to your remarks in a former part of your letter; where we are informed, that "he (your "Royal Highneſs) obſerves *only* generally "on the heads communicated by Mr. *Pitt*." But let us enquire with what juſtice this charge is made againſt the *propriety* of Mr. *Pitt's* conduct in communicating the

reſtric-

reſtriction. The plan of the reſtrictions is ſtated to have been formed by his Majeſty's confidential ſervants, to be propoſed to Parliament, and the reſtriction in queſtion forming a part of that plan, it doubtleſs became neceſſary (whether that reſtraint was in itſelf right or wrong, for that is not here the queſtion) to ſuggeſt it to your Royal Highneſs in common with the other reſtrictions, and had Mr. *Pitt ſuppreſſed* this part in communicating the plan to your Royal Highneſs, would not ſuch *deception* have juſtly ſubjected him to cenſure?

With reſpect to the reſtraint itſelf, we are told, that "The Prince does not conceive that during the life of the King, he "is by law entitled to make any ſuch "grant." When the higheſt *Legal Character** in this kingdom, has *publicly contradicted*

* Lord Kennyon.

dicted this doctrine, it would, I believe, be deemed ſuperfluous to call in the aid of caſes, or argument to ſupport what was then maintained by his Lordſhip, and which no body has been ſince found *bold enough* to *controvert* or *deny*. I ſhall, therefore, only refer your Royal Highneſs to what has been laid down as law on this point in the Houſe of Lords, by the *Chief Juſtice of England*, whoſe authority as a *Lawyer*, is as high as his ſituation is elevated; his Lordſhip there ſtated, that in ſeveral caſes (and particularly inſtanced the caſes of *eſcheats* and *forfeitures*) your Royal Highneſs *would have* the power of *alienation*, unleſs provided againſt by *ſpecific reſtrictions*. What then are we to think of the *Legal advice* with which your Royal Highneſs is furniſhed? muſt it not be allowed, at leaſt upon this occaſion, to be as *erroneous*, as that with which your Royal Highneſs is ſupplied on *other ſubjects*.

When

When an argument is drawn againſt the Reſtrictions, from the "*preſumed* feelings "and wiſhes of his Majeſty, on the happy "day of his Recovery;" is it poſſible that any ſophiſtry can evince, that it will be *repugnant to his feelings?* to find, that during his much lamented indiſpoſition, the faithful ſervants of his Majeſty and the Public, co-operating with both Houſes of Parliament had provided, that the men whom his Majeſty and the united voice of his people, had ſo lately driven from the government of the kingdom, were *precluded* from apropriating to themſelves *irrevocably*, the moſt lucrative offices in the State, or that they were prevented from *beſetting* his Throne, with the *Leaders* and *Partiſans* of their *Faction*, dignified with the ſplendid honours of *Peerage*, though probably perſonally obnoxious to his Majeſty? Can his feelings be wounded becauſe *theſe men* are denied the power of *baniſhing* from his perſon, the old and faith-

ful ſervants of his *Houſhold*, and ſupplying their places by their *own favourites?* or can his *feelings* be injured, or his *wiſhes* fruſtrated, becauſe *theſe men* are precluded the poſſibility of dividing among the *rapacious and indigent* of their *Party*, thoſe *treaſures* which the provident affections of a *father* and a *king*, had laid up for the future ſupport of a *numerous offspring?*

I ſhall now advert to that paſſage of your Royal Highneſs's letter wherein, treating of the *Plan* ſubmitted to your conſideration, it is termed "a ſcheme, diſconnecting the "authority to command ſervice from the "power of animating it by reward, and "for allotting to the Prince all the inſidi-"ous duties of government, without the "means of ſoftening them to the public "by any one act of grace, favour, or be-"nignity." When we conſider how *great* the power is, with which your Royal High-

neſs is to be *inveſted*, and how, *comparatively*, *ſmall*, that which is to be *withheld*, we are *aſtoniſhed* at the *temerity* with which this aſſertion is made. Is no man to be animated to any act of public ſervice but by the expectation of an *immediate Peerage*, or a *Place* in his *Majeſty's houſehold?* or, can your Royal Highneſs, inveſted, as you will be, with *all* the *other* parts of Royal Patronage, confer *no reward* which can animate to public ſervice? Living under the free Britiſh Conſtitution, can we bear, with patience, to be told that any of the *duties* of Government *is*, or *can be inſidious?* And, when we know that your Royal Highneſs is to poſſeſs the whole patronage of the *army* and *navy*, of the *church*, of the *law*, and of the *revenue*, with an abſolute power of *pardoning* every *felon* or *delinquent* in the realm, muſt we not be filled with aſtoniſhment at the glaring *violation* of *truth*, when we are told that your Royal Highneſs is left without

the

the means of ſoftening theſe inſidious duties of Government to the public, "*by any one* "*act of grace, favour, or benignity*"?

But I am diſguſted with the hateful taſk of inveſtigating this maſs of *error* and of *falſehood*, to which your Royal Highneſs's name has been *criminally* annexed, by a *ſet of men* who have poſtponed the *honour* of their *Prince* to their *own intereſt*, and who have *proſtituted his auguſt name*, to obtrude upon the public the wretched ſophiſtry of a *deſperate Party*.

The *public welfare*, however, requires, that your Royal Highneſs ſhould be *undeceived*, and that the *conduct*, and the *motives* of *theſe men* ſhould be *unveiled* to your Royal Highneſs, and to the nation at large.

And, now, Sir, permit me to beſeech your Royal Highneſs to conſult the *pure and*

and ingenuous dictates of your *own* understanding; let me exhort you to *dismiss*, for ever, from your councils, the men who have suggested to you principles *subversive* of the *constitution and repugnant* to truth, and who have advised a measure *destructive* of your *interest*, and *derogatory* from your *honour*. *Banish* these men from your *confidence*, and give to the people you are now to govern, a *happy presage* of a glorious and auspicious reign.

I have the honour to be,

With the utmost deference,

SIR,

Your Royal Highness's

Most humble and obedient servant,

CANDOUR.

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FINIS.